

March 15, 1984

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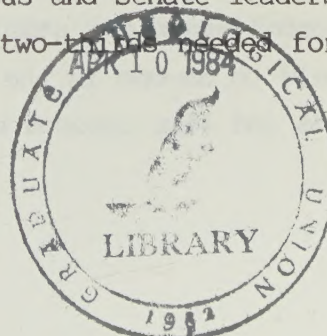
BISHOP ALLIN, 15 OTHERSOPPOSE SCHOOL PRAYER BID

DPS 84045

NEW YORK (DPS, March 15) — Presiding Bishop John M. Allin and 15 other Episcopal bishops have moved quickly to state the Church's opposition to efforts to restore prayer in public schools through a constitutional amendment.

The United States Senate has spent a significant amount of time and energy in the last two weeks grappling with a variety of proposals that seek such an amendment. After years of effort, the religious right has succeeded in getting the debate on the floor, but no single proposal has achieved anything like consensus and Senate leaders concede that they are far short of the necessary two-thirds needed for passage.

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DPS 84045/2

When the last such challenge surfaced, in 1981, the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church passed a resolution stating the Church's strong opposition to any form of government-organized or prescribed prayer in schools and that resolution was the basis for a letter Allin wrote to all senators last week. At nearly the same time, Washington Bishop John Walker and Washington ecumenical leaders joined in a Call to Work and Pray for the Preservation of the First Amendment. Fourteen Episcopal bishops were among the signers of that and one, Newark Bishop John Spong, issued an additional statement.

In his March 9 letter, Allin noted that the debate was being carried out with "the best intentions and the highest motivation on the part of many," but added that "any intrusion by the State into the sacred area of responsibility that must be exercised by family and church is bound to lead to resentment and a blurring of the natural social functions."

Assuring the senators that the Church was "dedicated to preserving the right of every person to pray whenever and wherever they desire", Allin urged them to "uphold the Constitution in its present form, and to oppose any amendment that would introduce prayer or any other religious exercise in our nation's public schools."

Walker and the other capitol-area leaders followed their Call with a vigil on the Capitol steps March 13. In their call, they stated: "We know that God is there in the public schools right now stirring the hearts of teachers and children...to prayer. We have taught our children to pray and they are there praying now."

"We have taught them to pray and we don't want government teaching them. Prayer is for parents to teach and not the board of education. Prayer is for the church and synagogue to teach and not the government."

In addition to the Episcopal bishops, the Washington Call was endorsed by Lutheran, Methodist, Jewish, African Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian and Baptist leaders who said of the argument that only "nonbelievers and atheists" oppose the amendment: "Don't demean us. We yield to no-one in the passion of our belief. We stand here as Christians and Jews opposed to tampering with our priceless heritage."

While echoing the pleas endorsed by both Allin and the Washington Call, Spong addressed most of his statement to the assertion that the effort to "put prayer back in school" -- as the proponents phrase it -- was an "inappropriate and naive" solution to the complex issues of social erosion. He argued that these problems should be addressed by "bold new initiatives" shared by religion and government in which the religious community must make new efforts to "communicate the values of our religious heritage...It must be clearly stated that we teach by example far more than by words. Our children will not adopt religious values unless they see them being lived out by their own parents and supported by the viable institutions of our land."

In addition to Allin, Spong and Walker, bishops who have taken part in these calls include: Robert M. Anderson of Minnesota; William B. Spofford Jr., of Washington; John B. Coburn of Massachusetts; Robert B. Hall of Virginia; Edward W. Jones of Indianapolis; A. Heath Light of Southwestern Virginia; Lyman C. Ogilby of Pennsylvania; Furman C. Stough of Alabama; William H. Clark of Delaware; A. Theodore Eastman of Maryland; George N. Hunt of Rhode Island; David H. Lewis, Jr. of Virginia; H. Coleman McGehee, Jr. of Michigan.

In the Senate, Missouri Republican John Danforth, an Episcopal priest and Connecticut Democrat Lowell Weicker have taken leading roles in opposing the amendments. Other Episcopalians in the Senate are: Ted Stevens, R-Alaska; Barry Goldwater, R-Arizona; William V. Roth, R-Delaware; Mack Mattingly, D-Georgia; Spark M. Matsunaga, D-Hawaii; Nancy Kassenbaum, R-Kansas; Charles Mathias, R-Maryland; James Exon, D-Nebraska; Mark Andrews, R-North Dakota; John Heinz, R-Pennsylvania; Claiborne Pell, D-Rhode Island; John Chafee, R-Rhode Island; John Warner, R-Virginia; Paul Tribble, R-Virginia; Slade Gorton, R-Washington; Robert Kasten, R-Wisconsin; and Alan Simpson and Malcolm Wallop, both Republicans of Wyoming.

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(**EDITORS:** The texts of Bishop Allin's letter and the resolution from the Executive Council are attached)

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DPS 84045/4

TEXT: Letter from the Most Rev. John M. Allin to all U.S. Senators

Dear Senator:

I am writing to you regarding the proposed constitutional amendments on prayer in public schools. The leadership of the Episcopal Church, as represented by the Executive Council, has made its position clear on this subject. I attach a copy of this policy resolution for your information.

In spite of the best intentions and the highest motivation on the part of many, any intrusion by the State into the sacred area of responsibility that must be exercised by family and church is bound to lead to resentment and a blurring of the natural social functions. It can mislead people as to the source of basic value formation and the true nature of religious freedom. If our families and our churches perform their duties well, there is no need to look to the State for direction in our spiritual exercises. We are dedicated to preserving the existing right of every person to pray whenever and wherever they desire in the free exercise of their religious faith.

I therefore urge you to uphold the Constitution in its present form, and to oppose any amendment that would introduce prayer or any other religious exercise in our nation's schools.

You are in my prayers as you take action on this issue.

Faithfully yours,

John M. Allin

PRESIDING BISHOP

RESOLUTION ON PRAYER/STATE INTERFERENCE:

(Passed by the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, November, 1981)

WHEREAS, there are proposals pending in the Congress of the United States to facilitate the establishing by governments of prayer in the public schools; and

WHEREAS, it is not and should not be the business of government to establish when people shall pray or the prayers which they shall use; and

WHEREAS, it is always open to any person to pray at any time whether in the public school, at work or at play; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Executive Council encourages the use of prayer in connection with all aspects of daily life; while at the same time strongly opposing all attempts by the state to establish when or how people shall pray, and thus opposing all government legislation which would prescribe means or methods of prayer in public schools or which is designed to encourage local authorities to prescribe such means or methods of prayer; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to every member of Congress.

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FORWARD PUBLISHES

BIOETHICAL STUDY

DPS 84046

NEW YORK (DPS, March 15) -- The diocese of Massachusetts and two New England priests have taken a leading role in producing a timely guide on bioethical issues -- Good Genes? Emerging Values for Science, Religion and Society -- published this month by Forward Movement.

The Rev. Colin Gracey, chaplain at Northeastern University and the Rev. David Ames, chaplain at Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design, edited the guide which is based on the work of the biotechnology study group convened by Massachusetts Bishop John B. Coburn in 1982. Drawing largely on the resources of the Boston area, that panel consisted of clergy, scientists, physicians, and social scientists with both practical and academic responsibilities in the many areas that are touched by new technologies.

Even with the backgrounds available within their numbers, the panel was careful to solicit as wide a range of comment and resources as possible. They called together 40 additional students of the disciplines for two days of intense review early in the curriculum development process and held two four-week parish test sessions near the beginning and the end of their work.

Additionally, Ames and Gracey, who were in a doctoral program at the Episcopal Divinity School, were able to use the faculty and seminars there to test the program. Much of this project was supported by a grant from the Public Issues Office of the Episcopal Church Center.

The resulting 140-page book begins with a theological overview and continues through six segments addressing various aspects of the issues through short essays, case studies, and discussion segments. An afterword contains personal reflections by the panelists on their work, a glossary, and a bibliography. The design is eucharistically centered. Transitional portions are included for scriptural reflection.

The subject sections include genetics and screening technology; pre-natal diagnostic and surgical advances; fertility problems and birth defects; the business of biology; and theology and culture.

The book is available from Forward Movement Publications, 412 Sycamore Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202 at \$3.95 or \$3.00 for ten or more.

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APSO EXPLORES

WORKER'S MINISTRY

DPS 84047

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (DPS, Mar. 15) — Forty-two lay persons and clergy concerned with working class ministries met at St. Peter's in the Valley, March 2-4, here to explore how the church can be more effective in this field.

As one woman stated, "I thought that the Episcopal Church was not doing much in the way of working class ministry. Now I've heard of several possible models. I feel we need to look more closely at them and to see if there are others."

To serve as a continuing focus for the issues raised by the those attending the conference, a steering committee headed by the Rev. Ward Ewing of St. Peter's was formed. This group will make available a conference report, gather additional data on working class ministry and look into the possibility of publishing a newsletter. The conference was hosted by the Rt. Rev. David B. Reed, Bishop of Kentucky.

The Rev. Robert W. Carlson, professor of field education at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill., was keynote speaker. He outlined some of the characteristics of people in working class parishes based on his own experiences and observations.

"The special relationship working class people have to their jobs affects many facets of their lives. A major feature of that relationship has to do with a lack of ownership of their jobs and a subsequent sense of insecurity", Carlson believes.

Another feature has to do with the leadership roles working people fill in their churches. Such leadership may have a different meaning than for professional or managerial persons. "The church," according to Carlson, "may be the one place where they can try out and exercise such leadership."

Disillusionment is a predominant characteristic mentioned by Carlson. "The American dream -- 'work hard, play by the rules, and you'll be rewarded' -- has been seriously eroded in the last several years."

Small groups gathered to share the way these and other characteristics manifest themselves in the lives of those working class persons present and in the parishes represented.

DPS 84047/2

Seminars dealt with workable approaches to evangelism, coping with stress, building and being a Christian community, and service to the neighborhood in a working class parish.

Carlson's reminders that the church is called to be prophetic, "to be concerned for and to speak out for justice," and that "we need to take seriously the dreams of working people: their dreams for job security, for decent working conditions, for a better life for their children, for some say in their future, for secure retirement when they cannot work anymore," were echoed at the closing Eucharist.

The Rev. Hugh C. White, Jr., director of the Detroit Industrial Mission and the conference preacher, stressed that Jesus' ministry was, first and foremost, pastoral. He "stood with" people, healed the sick, and became involved in the life of the individual. "His prophetic voice came from his pastoral care."

He went on to add, "The first century rulers thought they had killed the dreamer and the dream. But they hadn't. Because of the resurrection, we (the Church) of the twentieth century, are dreamers of His dream."

A full conference report can be obtained from the office of Appalachian People's Service Organization, P.O. Box 1007, Blacksburg, Va. 24060, (703) 552-3795.

A second "Working Class Ministry Event" is being planned for April 19-21, 1985. It will probably feature models of ministries that have been successful, workshops and seminars. It is hoped it will also be an opportunity to dream together and be of mutual support.

Congregations involved in ministry with the working class or with working class communities are asked to contact Ewing or the Service office to share ideas, "how-to" information, dreams, disappointments, and needs.

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FORWARD MOVEMENT CELEBRATES

50 YEARS OF SERVICE

DPS 84048

CINCINNATI (DPS, Mar.15)--Almost every Episcopal parish has a tract rack with dozens of small pamphlets and books published by Forward Movement Publications, with perhaps the best loved and most widely circulated of these being Forward Day by Day, the quarterly booklet of daily devotions. That organization is marking 50 years of service to the Church this year.

The idea for Forward Movement originated with the late Bishop Henry Wise Hobson of the Diocese of Southern Ohio. Attending the 1934 General Convention as a new bishop, Hobson was distressed at the Depression-related low morale he found there. Gathering together some kindred spirits, he spearheaded a church-wide plan for renewal--a "forward movement". The instructions were "to renew the life and reinvigorate the work" of the church. Out of this came Forward Day by Day, which has been a source of daily comfort and inspiration to millions of Episcopalians.

The Rev. Charles H. Long, editor and director of Forward Movement, estimates that circulation is currently more than 500,000 and growing. Many Episcopal parishes in the U.S. and Canada subscribe on a bulk order basis and distribute Forward Day by Day in their tract racks. He also notes that there are about 20,000 individual subscribers, including a substantial number from other denominations.

Long says that authors come not only from the Episcopal Church but also from many segments of the Anglican Communion. "In the last two years, our writers have included a Canadian dean; the Canon Chancellor of Yorkminster; two bishops; lay persons, both men and women; and not long ago, a whole seminary faculty".

In addition to the daily devotional guide, he notes, "We publish a wide assortment of tracts, pamphlets, and small paperbacks for parish use. We have about 300 titles in stock and mail nearly two million items a year. We add about 30 new titles each year." Interestingly, all this has been done without any church money. All costs are met by the sale of these modestly-priced items.

DPS 84048/2

Long notes a shift of interest in titles and subjects recently. "There has been a shift from the titles dealing with personal crises--death, divorce, alcoholism, etc.--to resources for evangelism, the training of new members, and interpretation of the Sacraments as presented in the new Prayer Book. Other best sellers among recent paperbacks include Countdown to Disaster, on reversing the nuclear arms race; The Final Report of ARCIC, the Anglican Roman Catholic International Consultation; and To Hear and To Heed, a report of the Episcopal Urban Caucus.

As part of an effort to expand to ecumenical circles and other denominations, Forward Movement is experimenting with a monthly periodical, The Review of Books and Religion. According to Long, this is the only independent review of publications in religion from all American sources.

Long was general secretary for the North American Division of the World Council of Churches prior to coming to Forward Movement in 1978. Before that, he had been a college chaplain, parish priest, and seminary teacher, in addition to serving as a missionary in China and Hong Kong.

He says, "The heart of our work will continue to be a response to the needs of local congregations, as the local clergy perceive those needs, for printed material to assist them in their ministry and mission. Our only aim, in the language of an earlier day, is to 'forward' the 'movement' of the Kingdom of God."

A free catalog of Forward Movement Publications can be obtained by writing them at the offices they share with the Diocese of Southern Ohio at 412 Sycamore Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202.

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SOUTH DAKOTANS TAP

SEWANEE PROFESSOR

DPS 84049

HURON, S.D. (DPS, Mar. 15) — Delegates of the Episcopal Diocese of South Dakota, meeting at a special election convention in Grace Episcopal Church, Huron, S.D., March 3, elected The Rev. Craig Barry Anderson, Sewanee, Tenn., to be Bishop of South Dakota. Election came on the seventh ballot.

The election was held within the context of the Eucharist, with the names of the nominees presented at the offertory. After everyone had received communion the balloting began. The post communion prayer of thanksgiving followed the electing ballot. The Rt. Rev. Harold Jones, South Dakota's retired suffragan bishop, pronounced the blessing.

The Episcopal Church in South Dakota has been without a diocesan bishop, since March, 1983, when the Rt. Rev. Walter H. Jones resigned to become Bishop of Rupert's Land, Canada. An election convention held in June, 1983, ended in deadlock.

Anderson is professor of pastoral theology at the School of Theology, Sewanee, Tenn. He is also priest-in-charge of Christ Episcopal Church, Alton, Tenn.

Anderson was born in 1942 in Glendale, Calif. He received his BA from Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Ind., in 1963. Prior to studying for the Episcopal ministry, Anderson was an executive with Proctor and Gambel Company in the western United States.

In 1975, Anderson earned a M.Div. degree at the University of the South, Sewanee. He was ordained deacon in the Episcopal Church in 1974; and priest in 1975. He has earned MA and PhD degrees from Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn.

Anderson has led retreats, consultations, and camps for youth and adults in eight states. He is a board member of the Appalachian People Service Organization.

Anderson's wife is Lizbeth Johnston, a Colorado native. They have three children, a son and two daughters, ages 11, 7, and 2. Anderson has ties to South Dakota through his parents and grandparents.

The date for the consecration of Anderson as Bishop of South Dakota has not yet been set. It is anticipated that the consecration will be held in late August.

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T.S. HALLER TAKES

COMMUNICATION POST

DPS 84050

NEW YORK, (DPS, March 15) -- Tobias S. Haller, BSG, has been named to the post of assistant publications director in the communication unit at the Episcopal Church Center.

His appointment, announced by Presiding Bishop John M. Allin at a staff meeting last week, fills a new position first authorized this year and completes a restructuring of the communication office that began last year. Haller will work with publications director Frank L. Tedeschi in writing, editing, design and planning of the numerous regular and special books, pamphlets and folders produced in support of Church programs each year.

In addition to working with Church Center staff to help meet their communication needs, Haller will manage the work of the independent contractors producing these materials.

A native of Maryland, he is an honors graduate of Towson State College (Maryland). A lay religious of the Brotherhood of St. Gregory, he is education director for the community and edited its publication for two years. He has been serving as secretary to the executive for communication for six months. Prior to that he was an editorial assistant to the Diocesan Press Service and a consultant to Church communication projects.

His latest article appeared in "Wellspring" in this year and his photographs have appeared in newspapers and trade publications. He is a member of St. Luke in the Fields, New York, where he is a chorister and musician. He has also worked and taught for many years in the performing arts.

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WEST TEXANS BOLSTER

HUNGER PROGRAMS

DPS 84051

SAN ANTONIO, Tex. (DPS, Mar. 15) -- Episcopalians in the 60-county Diocese of West Texas, which stretches from the hill country to the Mexican border, will use their own hunger network to distribute food and financial aid to the economically depressed Rio Grande Valley.

The Rev. Canon C. Eugene Jennings, administrative assistant to Bishop Scott F. Bailey; and the Rev. Ted Knies, rector of Trinity Church, Pharr and dean of the Valley Convocation, announced after a strategy meeting of Episcopal churches in the Valley late in February that the church's existing distribution network will be used and expanded to funnel food and money to the needy from Rio Grande City to Brownsville. It is expected to handle more than a million pounds of food per year, they said.

Meanwhile, Jennings announced that with only one-third of the 91 congregations in the diocese reporting by the end of February, approximately \$20,500 has been sent to diocesan headquarters for Valley relief as the result of special offerings taken Sunday, Feb. 19. Since some churches extended the period for this appeal, as much as three times that amount may eventually be available for work in the Valley. The special appeal had been designated by Bailey at the annual council of the diocese in McAllen Feb. 2-4.

Jennings sees conditions in the Valley as a continuing problem. "The situation in the Valley is persistent and permanent and deepened in the aftermath of the December freeze," he said, but noted "Episcopalians have been committed to large-scale help there for years."

Oldest of the relief projects is the "Brown Bag" program begun a decade ago by members of St. John's Church in McAllen when Jennings was rector there. In this fresh produce distribution system, which uses volunteer help, tons of vegetables donated by packing sheds are picked up in a truck purchased by the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief and distributed to as many as 60,000 persons up and down the Rio Grande. Jennings said the program handles an average of some 600,000 pounds of fresh food annually.

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DPS 84051/2

In nearby Pharr, the food pantry of Trinity Church warehouses canned goods and staples sent to it free by the H.E.B. Company and distributes food to the poor through satellite churches and agencies located in Valley communities. In full operation for only six months, the pantry will probably be handling about 400,000 pounds of food a year. Other projects are still in the developmental stage.

Related to these programs is Operation Grapefruit, managed by the Episcopal diocese's Hope for the Hungry Committee in San Antonio, which annually distributes more than 95,000 twenty-pound boxes of fruit to communities both in and outside the diocese as well as to Indian reservations in New Mexico and Arizona.

Jennings points to three key ingredients in these Episcopal Church enterprises. The first, he says, is the good will and genuine interest of packing shed operators, the H.E.B. Company, the Crest Fruit Company, and the personnel of these firms. "The contribution of the food industry is vital to the life of these programs," he says.

Second, the work is done by volunteers. "Valley churchmen," he says, "plus those blessed winter visitors and the recipients of the food themselves who want to come and work stand shoulder to shoulder pooling strength and talent which money couldn't buy as they make their contribution."

The third ingredient is the ecumenical aspect, he says. "Caring Christians have seen this as a task to be shared," Jennings continues, "and in the process they are drawn together at a level that has meaning. They not only work together, they pray together, feel each other's frustrations, share triumphs."

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PEACE WORK GAINS

ECUMENICAL DIMENSION

DPS 84052

NEW YORK (DPS, Mar. 15) -- Late last year, the growing national concern for peace took the shape, in Iowa and Pennsylvania, of ecumenically produced peace statements.

The Iowa statement grew out of a two-day gathering co-sponsored by the Iowa Inter-Church Forum and the Ecumenical Consultation of Iowa City. The meeting was termed "unprecedented in Iowa's ecumenical witness" by a spokesman for the former group. He added "The sixteen Christian leaders who met in Iowa City represented thirteen traditions. This is the largest group ever to meet and develop a common statement on any issue of concern."

Participants in the conference included clergy and representatives from Episcopal, Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Baptist, Presbyterian, Mennonite, and Reformed churches. The Rt. Rev. Walter C. Righter, Episcopal Bishop of Iowa, was not present at the meeting but later signed the statement developed there.

In addition to the joint statement, the members of the Iowa group made ten covenants with one another. These included commitments to pray, fast and study for the cause of peace, work for a peace curriculum in the schools and universities of Iowa, and to enter into dialog with legislative leaders about the concerns set forth in the pastoral message.

In Pennsylvania, the process was a little different. There the statement evolved from a peace issues study group made up of appointed representatives from the Pennsylvania Council of Churches and the Pennsylvania Conference on Interchurch Cooperation. This group developed a proposed pastoral statement on peace which was then sent to the Roman Catholic bishops and heads of Protestant judicatories in Pennsylvania.

The results were generally positive, and by the time the statement was officially issued, it had been signed by 50 church leaders representing more than 40 denominations. Included among these were the bishops of all five Episcopal dioceses in Pennsylvania. The statement was published in full in the Diocese of Pennsylvania's Diocesan News.

DPS 84052/2

The Pennsylvania document states the belief that "Peace is the only framework within which a future compatible with human life can unfold," and continues that the vision of peace is one that requires conversion. Among the old views that it cites as needing change are "isolated individualism and competition as the basis of human and national identities" and "stability as a substitute for peace without regard for justice".

Both the Iowa and the Pennsylvania statements share a call to prayer and study and both recognize the need for peace-making efforts on a small scale among individuals as well as between nations.

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SWEEP, PARTNERSHIP

AID DIOCESE'S MISSION

DPS 84053

ROANOKE, Va. (DPS, Mar. 15) -- The Diocese of Southwestern Virginia has become the first to implement the SWEEP (service, worship, education, evangelism, and pastoral care) concept in its parishes on a diocese-wide level and it has done so in connection with an adaptation of the Partners in Mission program. A celebration of this occurred at the recent Southwestern Virginia annual council meeting, where delegates and visitors from its 55 congregations exchanged ways they carry on their Christian mission in SWEEP categories.

Instead of hearing an "inspirational" address from a nationally known speaker as is often done at conventions, council representatives inspired one another with the stories of their congregations. Ranged throughout five rooms -- one for each convocation in the diocese -- they told these stories using slide shows, photographs, banners, newspaper clippings, posters, parish histories, skits, handouts, and conversation.

"This effort required some encouragement, for it involved some risk," commented the Rt. Rev. A. Heath Light, bishop. "Congregations were appropriately uneasy about 'bragging' and understandably anxious about odious comparisons."

Delegates and visitors spent most of Saturday morning browsing through the exhibits, talking with representatives from each congregation, jotting down ideas to take back to their parishes and simply learning what their diocesan partners in mission are doing.

Among the visitors were the diocese's "external" partners in mission: two laypersons from Southwestern Virginia's companion diocese of Bradford, England; a deacon from the Sudan -- Bradford's and Southwestern Virginia's companion in mission; an assistant to a Lutheran bishop; a Presbyterian cleric; and a Roman Catholic priest who is co-pastor with an Episcopal priest of Holy Apostles, Tidewater, Va., the only Episcopal/Roman Catholic parish in the nation.

During a panel discussion following the tour of exhibits, each ecumenical partner in mission commented on the strengths and weaknesses they had perceived when looking at the life of the diocese.

DPS 84053/2

Commented Charles Shenberger, administrative assistant to the Lutheran bishop of the Virginia synod: "I realize that your working together on a project such as this...has a value in and of itself."

Panelists noted the diocese's strengths in worship and the wide range of key ministries to the elderly, hungry, deaf, emotionally handicapped and college students.

"I appreciate the way you cooperate ecumenically", said the Rev. Raymond Barton, Roman Catholic priest. "That makes so much sense."

Panelists also noted the diocese's weaknesses. They saw no emphasis on world and local issues. They missed seeing ways Episcopalians evangelize to outsiders.

"I see the Gospel being displayed by love and deed, but what about the Word?" asked Mrs. Joan Simms, Southwestern Virginia's partner in mission from the Diocese of Bradford.

"Your very invitation to a group like this to be partners with you in mission is one of the rich gifts that has historically characterized your church," said the Rev. Dr. George Telford, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Blacksburg, Va. and a member of that denomination's ecumenical coordinating team.

Initiated two years ago, the adaptation of the Partners in Mission concept as used in the diocese, was designed to overcome the attitude that the Church is only "our congregation."

"We had no cross-fertilization between the congregations," explained the Rev. Richard Hayes, deputy for congregational life. "We weren't sharing our common strengths and didn't trust one another enough to talk about our weaknesses."

Having evaluated themselves in terms of the five elements of mission as requested by the Presiding Bishop and the 1982 General Convention, the congregations went a step further and shared evaluations with one another.

As a result of this effort, Hayes anticipates that congregations will respond more intently to the direction of the diocese's common life. He sees congregations making a more serious effort in the area of evangelism and moral discourse on global issues during the next five years.

"The good seeds have been planted. Whatever fruit they bring will be up to their nurturing and to God's grace," Hayes said.

BISHOP ROMERO GIVEN

EL SALVADOR OVERSIGHT

DPS 84050

NEW YORK, (DPS, March 15) -- The Rt. Rev. Leonardo Romero, Bishop of the Diocese of Northern Mexico, has been appointed Bishop-in-Charge of El Salvador by the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, the Most Rev. John M. Allin.

Romero, president of Province IX (11 dioceses in Central America and the Caribbean) succeeds Bishop G. Edward Haynsworth, executive for World Mission at the Episcopal Church Center in New York.

Romero's appointment was made at the recommendation of the standing committee of the Diocese of El Salvador.

The Episcopal Church in El Salvador is probably the smallest in all the Anglican Communion. It has several missions in both urban and rural areas served by two priests -- Luis Serrrano and Victoriano Jimeno. However, the Episcopal Church sponsors CREDHO, a large social and development program among peasants and low-income city dwellers.

Romero will have pastoral oversight of the diocese and will visit the war-torn country regularly .

The Episcopal Church in El Salvador has suffered nine violent deaths in recent years. South African Ambassador Archibald Dunn was murdered in 1979 after being kidnapped for several months and Dr. Rosa Judith Cisneros, a 45-year-old Salvadoran lawyer was killed in 1980 as she was leaving her home. Just last year, seven peasants in La Florida, a church-sponsored model farm, were murdered and their bodies mutilated.

El Salvador and Nicaragua are the only Central American dioceses that do not have a resident bishop. The Episcopal Church work in El Salvador began in the late 50's.

###

CHURCH VIDEO TEAMS

FILM IN HOLY LAND

DPS 84055

NEW YORK, (DPS, March 15) -- A collaboration among Episcopal Church video teams enhanced a filming tour of the Holy Land and has provided the Church with videotapes that can meet a number of needs.

Whitney Smith of the Episcopal Church Center; Jack and Linda Hanick of Trinity Church, New York; and the Rev. Lois Pinneo, the Rev. Rob McCann and the Rev. Phil Wiehe, from the Diocese of California were all in Israel Feb. 1-8, traveling together but with different mandates.

Smith, a video producer on the staff of the Episcopal Church Center, was gathering information for a program to highlight ministries in the Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East, particularly those supported by the Good Friday offering .

Trinity Church sent the Hanicks of Good News Communications to produce two programs for Trinity's weekly half-hour series, Searching.

At the request of Bishop William Swing of the Diocese of California, McCann and Pinneo were taping material for their diocese. They were also preparing videotape for St. George's College, Jerusalem. Pinneo and McCann chair the video task force of the diocese. Ann Scott, the only reporter on the tour, is religion writer for the Contra Costa Times and a member of the diocese's communication committee.

Wiehe, from Palo Alto, Calif., is executive director of the Episcopal Foundation for Drama, a national organization. He performed his own brief Christmas drama which was taped in the Shepherd's Fields in Bethlehem.

The Americans discovered quickly that it was most efficient to form a single production team and have everyone work together on all of the projects. This was so successful that the group returned to the United States with enough videotape for all of their projects and also managed to create and execute several more during the trip.

The Israeli Ministry of Tourism permitted the crew to videotape in places not ordinarily accessible to the public. For example, there was a media conference in Metulla, the northernmost town of Israel.

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The video crew interviewed the assistant mayor of the town and the captain at the nearby border crossing called "the Good Fence", on the Lebanese border.

In summing up the tour, McCann commented: "Tourism is gradually replacing pilgrimage as a reason to go to Israel. This represents, in part, a failure of the Christian community to support an aspect of traditional spirituality." The communicators were unanimous in the hope that their work would provide for viewers a sense of the spiritual significance of the Holy Land. Smith said: "We have seen and felt some of the unique essence of this holy land where our spiritual roots still draw strength. Israel today is a complex mix of the ancient and the modern, of the secular and the spiritual. We hope our video efforts will convey the vitality and joyous life that both citizens and visitors in Israel, regardless of creed, draw from this amazing place."

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PICTURE CAPTIONS (84055)

(84055/1) -- Whitney Smith, (left), radio-television producer at the Episcopal Church Center, and the Rev. Lois Pinneo of the Diocese of California, (back to camera) check a set-up as Linda and Jack Hanick prepare the equipment for filming at an archeological "dig" near Ceserea in Israel. The four were part of a team that spent a week in Israel collecting video tape for use by California, Trinity Church, New York, and the Church Center. The Hanicks are with "Good News Communication" producers of the Trinity Series, "Searching".

(84055/2) -- The Rev. Rob McCann of the Diocese of California interviews the Rev. Canon Riah Abu El-Assal and Greek Orthodox pastor Father Nathaniel in Nazareth for part of a video series the diocese is planning. The equipment is being operated by Jack Hanick, (camera) and Linda Hanick (sound, lower foreground) of Good News Communication, New York. The three were part of a team of Episcopalians preparing a number of cable and television programs in the Holy Land.

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